

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 186, SPRINGFIELD,**  
**SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS**  
**Tuesday, October 2, 2023 (5:30 PM)**

The Board of Education convened in Regular Session on October 2 A.D., 2023, at 5:30 p.m., there being present thereat:

Present: Micah Miller, President  
Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Erica Austin  
Sarah Blissett  
Ken Gilmore  
Debra Iams  
Buffy Lael-Wolf  
Anthony Mares

Jennifer Gill, Superintendent  
Harrison Gray, Student Representative

**CALL TO ORDER**

**1.1 Roll Call**

President Miller called the meeting to order.

**APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Approval of Executive Session**

**Resolution:** That the Board of Education approves adjournment to Executive Session to consider the following items:

- 2.1 Student Discipline and Other Matters Concerning Individual Students - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9, 10)
- 2.2 The Appointment, Employment, or Dismissal of Employees – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)
- 2.3 Pending and Imminent Litigation - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)
- 2.4 Real Estate - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5,6)

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member (**Sarah Blissett**) Moved, Member (**Buffy Lael-Wolf**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'That the Board of Education adjourns to Executive Session to consider the following matters: 2.1 Student Discipline and Other Matters Concerning Individual Students - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9, 10), 2.2 The Appointment, Employment, or Dismissal of Employees – 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), 2.3 Pending and Imminent Litigation - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11), 2.4 Real Estate - 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5,6).'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 5 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 5 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Blissett, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

### **Adjournment to Executive Session**

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m. and reconvened at 6:47 p.m. Upon reconvening, it was noted that seven Board members were present as Mr. Gilmore and Ms. Iams joined the meeting at 5:33 p.m.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **3.1 Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Miller asked those in attendance to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

#### **4.1 Approve the Agenda for October 2, 2023**

Resolution: That the Board of Education approves the agenda.

#### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Anthony Mares)** Moved to approve the agenda. Member **(Buffy Lael-Wolf)** seconded to approve the ORIGINAL motion, 'That the Board of Education approves the agenda.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

#### **5.1 President's Comments**

Mr. Miller read the following statement:

#### **Public Comment**

*Public comments will occur during the Public Comments portion of the meeting. The Board will not allow interruption during the meeting. If you are interested in addressing the Board, fill out the required Public Participation form and submit it to Ms. Hammers. Alternatively, those wishing to participate via the telephone may email their name, phone number, and topic of discussion or agenda item number to [boe@sps186.org](mailto:boe@sps186.org).*

#### **5.2 Student Report**

Mr. Gray reported that each of the high schools recently hosted homecoming. He thanked teachers and volunteers who worked to ensure each school's dance was successful and fun for students.

Mr. Gray reported that the Superintendent's Student Roundtable's next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 4, 2023. The meeting will take place in the district's new administration building, 3063 Fiat Avenue. Mr. Gray noted that interested students may still join the group.

Next, Mr. Gray encouraged students to consider getting involved in a sport or extracurricular activity at their school. He then gave a reminder that there is no school on October 9, 2023, in observance of a federal holiday.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **6.1 Superintendent's Report**

A moment of silence was observed for Pawnee Superintendent of Schools, Tim Kratochvil, Bob Wilder, retired Lanphier High School teacher, and Donna Sharp, retired Southeast High School secretary. Superintendent Gill reported that each of these individuals had recently passed away.

#### **Celebrate 186**

Superintendent Gill provided the bi-weekly Celebrate 186 presentation. Copies of the presentation have been filed with the Official Minutes. The report covered the following topics.

#### **Presidential Volunteer Scholar Gold Award**

Springfield High School Freshman, Meher Garg, has been awarded the Presidential Volunteer Scholar Gold Award for her volunteer work. Over the summer, Meher spent time at St. John's Hospital where she played violin and flute for inpatients. Meher will receive a letter, certificate, and medal from the President of the United States.

Meher was also recently elected as class president for the freshman class at Springfield High School. She is a member of the Superintendent's Student Roundtable and on the varsity girls' golf team.

#### **Horace Mann Volunteers at Dubois Library**

Thirty volunteers from Horace Mann visited Dubois Elementary during the week of September 25, 2023, to lend a hand in the library. Horace Mann has donated their time for service. The Horace Mann Foundation also provided a grant to purchase some of the furniture and new bookshelves for the library space.

#### **Lanphier High School Hosts Sangamon County State's Attorney Dan Wright and Senator Doris Turner**

Sangamon County State's Attorney Dan Wright, and Senator Doris Turner recently visited Lanphier High School for an event hosted by Lanphier's Student Government Association. Superintendent Gill reported that the elected officials collaborated on a great question-and-answer session during the event. State's Attorney Wright created the P.U.P.I.L. Network during the pandemic as a way to encourage and facilitate the pursuit of careers in public interest law.

#### **Ridgely Hosts Academic Parent Teacher Teams Night**

Superintendent Gill reported that Ridgely Elementary had a great turn-out for their Academic Parent Teacher Teams' Night. Families learned how their students were doing academically and were taught fun strategies to help support their students at home.

#### **Jefferson Pride Cards**

Students at Jefferson Middle School can earn PRIDE cards this year by helping make their classroom run more smoothly, by enhancing the learning experience for themselves and others, and by contributing to the school-wide culture. Teachers and staff award them with either a 1, 5, or 10 depending upon the level. Students can then cash in their PRIDE cards at the PRIDE store set-up during lunch.

## **Immunization Updates**

Superintendent Gill reported that 261 students have not turned in the required physical or immunization documents, which allows students to continue attending school. She noted that this is 50% less than last year at this time. She thanked the District's nursing team for their work with families to ensure compliance with this State law.

## **SPS Foundation Breakfast Club Event**

The Springfield Public Schools Foundation will host their annual Breakfast Club event on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 7:30 a.m. in the District's new Administrative Center, 3063 Fiat Avenue. Superintendent Gill will give a state of the District message, including the use of ESSER funds and ongoing facilities improvements.

The event will also be live-streamed through the District's YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/user/spschannel22](http://www.youtube.com/user/spschannel22).

## **Our Schools Our Future Facilities Update**

Superintendent Gill shared information about the Lanphier High School construction project. She reported that a January 2024 completion date is expected for the school's gyms and remodeled classrooms. The Edison Wing and old Lober Nika Gym will be demolished. The current Commons area will become a center for Trades' education. The location of the current gym will be a new student entrance. The Edison Wing will become a parking lot to serve the school and stadium. Superintendent Gill also shared photos of the new scoreboard in the new Lober-Nika Gym, as well as the new floors that have been installed in the new Gardner Gym. She noted that the floor will be complete within the next two weeks.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **7.1 Old Business**

There was no old business at this time.

### **7.2 New Business**

#### **Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) Liaison Report**

Ms. Lael-Wolf reported that she is the IASB liaison for the District 186 Board of Education. She indicated that the IASB is conducting outreach through the newly created liaison group. She shared information from the liaison meeting, as follows:

- IASB Division Meetings will take place from October 3, 2023, through October 30, 2023. Additional details about the meetings can be found on the IASB website.
- Registration for the Joint Annual Conference in November is still open. Early bird registration ends on October 13, 2023. This is also the final day to request a refund.
- An IASB Resolutions Committee Report is available for review. Liaisons have been asked to share the report with Board members and discuss it to determine how the Board will vote on each of the proposals during the delegate assembly at the Joint Annual Conference. A delegate will also need to be selected.
- A new Annual School Calendar is available. The calendar contains statutory deadlines from the Election Code, School Code, and selected acts of the General Assembly relevant to school boards.

Mrs. Lael-Wolf noted that the Liaison Report will be provided on a monthly basis.

## **Springfield High School Construction Meeting**

Mr. Gilmore reported that he recently attended a meeting at Springfield High School regarding the upcoming construction planned for the school. Attendees included teachers and staff.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **8.1 Public Comment**

Mr. Miller asked if there was any public comment. He then read the following statement:

*The Board of Education and I encourage public comment and public participation in Board meetings. However, it is inappropriate for any person to name a student or an individual employee, including designating an employee by job title rather than name, in open session. If any public commenter wants to address issues related to an individual student or a District 186 employee, that commenter is invited to contact the Board office or a member of the cabinet prior to public comment. It is not the intention of the Board to discourage public comment in any way; rather, it is the intention of the Board to address issues regarding individual students and employees in an appropriate manner. We thank you for respecting the privacy of our students and employees by following this rule.*

*District 186 streams board meetings on YouTube, and all content posted there is subject to YouTube's content guidelines.*

*Springfield Public Schools District 186 continues to encourage public comment. Statements made by speakers during public comment do not represent the views or opinions of the Board of Education or Springfield Public Schools District 186.*

There was no public comment at this time.

## **PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD**

There were no presentations to the Board at this time.

## **BUSINESS REPORT**

### **10.1 Business Report**

Board members were provided with the Business Office Report of October 2, 2023. Copies filed with the Official Minutes are available for public viewing on the Electronic School Board website.

Steve Miller, Director of Business Services, reported that the evening's report will provide a recap of outstanding State payments as of September 26, 2023, and the cash roll forward for the Capital Projects Fund as of August 31, 2023.

Mr. Miller overviewed the outstanding payments from the State of Illinois. He indicated that outstanding payments for fiscal year 2024 total approximately \$2.5 million as of September 26, 2023. Driver's Education program totals approximately \$73,000, with approximately \$42,100 from fiscal year 2023, and approximately \$30,700 from fiscal year 2024. Special Education programs total approximately \$501,500. He noted that both of the items are in the Education Fund. He reported that there are also approximately \$4,700 of outstanding payments due the District from the State of Illinois for the State Free Lunch and

Breakfast Food Service funding. An additional \$1.9 million is due the District from the State for transportation reimbursements.

Next, Mr. Miller provided details for the cash roll forward detail of the Capital Projects Fund revenues and expenditures incurred during the month of August 2023. He noted that the report includes a report of sales tax revenue and bond transactions within the capital improvements. He indicated that the Capital Projects cash roll forward review shows a starting balance of approximately \$82.85 million. August Sales Tax receipts of approximately \$1.16 million were reported for the May reporting period. Bond draws and expenses for the period came to approximately \$3.9 million, while dividends and interest for the period resulted in approximately \$600,000, yielding an ending balance of approximately \$164.4 million. He noted that the large increase is due to the Bond sale proceeds being dispersed on August 1, 2023.

### **10.2 First Planning Solutions Proposal**

Board members were provided with a proposal related to First Planning Solutions, related to student transportation.

Steve Miller provided an overview of the proposal. He provided information regarding the number of bus runs the District routes. He reported that currently, three employees route the majority of buses. The Dispatcher at First Student routes all Special Education routes. He indicated that if any of the three employees are gone, routing is severely impacted. Mr. Miller then noted that approximately 50 transportation change requests are received each week. Currently, each of the requests takes about a week to go into effect as they must be individually completed.

Mr. Miller then provided information regarding First Planning Solutions. He noted that the company currently routes for over 150 locations or school districts, including McLean County District #5 and Indianapolis Public Schools. The company uses a program that will route all regular education, special education, early childhood and summer school program buses. He noted that the average turnaround time for a bus change request to go into effect with the program is three days. The company also provides transportation reports to the Transportation Department and route sheets to the schools. They will link with on-bus technology provided to First Student's drivers and to First View.

Mr. Miller reported that the program will route buses based on the student's location and from that, set parameters. The program will optimize routes for efficiency. Consulting services that provide cost-effective insights to operations and scenario modeling are also included in the proposal.

Next, Mr. Miller provided information related to cost. He noted that the total cost is \$90,000 per year with First Student absorbing a third of the cost. The total cost to the District for the first year will be \$60,000. The total cost for year two is \$63,000 and year three is \$66,000. He indicated that the cost will be paid out of the Transportation Fund. It will be eligible to be claimed on the State Claim. As such, the District will be reimbursed by the State for 80% of the cost.

Mr. Miller then provided information on additional savings that will be realized if the proposal is approved. He indicated that in the third year of the contract, the District will not need to renew the contract with Edulog. The FPS license will be used instead, resulting in a savings of approximately \$18,000. Additionally, the Transportation Department will not replace the Edulog Operator upon his retirement in January. Mr. Miller reported that the savings realized by not replacing the Edulog Operator will exceed the yearly cost of the FPS.

## **CONSENT ACTION ITEMS**

### **11.1 Approval of Consent Action Items**

Approval of consent action items as listed in the agenda.

**Resolution:** The Superintendent recommends approval of the consent action items 11.2 through 11.9 as described in the corresponding resolutions.

### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Sarah Blissett)** Moved, Member **(Erica Austin)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends approval of the consent action items 11.2 through 11.9 as described in the corresponding resolutions'.

There was some discussion regarding 11.9. Ms. Blissett inquired about how the host school is selected for co-op sports. Jason Wind, Director of School Support, indicated that the number of students participating in this particular co-op from each school was reviewed. Because Springfield High School had the largest number of girls wrestling, they will be the host. Ms. Blissett then asked about the name for the team. Mr. Wind reported that Lady Capitals was selected as it is currently used by other co-oped sports teams from District 186 and to differentiate the team from individual school teams. Ms. Blissett expressed concern regarding the use of the same name used for the E-Sports team due to potential confusion that may be created. There was then a short amount of additional discussion regarding the name.

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller

Those voting "no": None

### **11.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session and Regular Meeting of September 18, 2023**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Springfield School District 186 reviews the minutes of the regular session and the executive session of the previous Board Meetings; and

WHEREAS, copies of these sets of minutes were distributed to the Board in the board packet prior to this meeting;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the aforementioned sets of regular session and executive session minutes and directs the Secretary to include them in the official records of the Board of Education meetings.

### **11.3 Approval of Payroll and Bills Payable**

**Resolution:** That the Board of Education approves payroll and bills payable as shown in the attached report.

### **11.4 Tabulation of Bids and Recommendation for Purchase and Payment Bid #24-03 — Copy Paper**

**Resolution:** BE IT RESOLVED to accept the low acceptable bid for the following bids and to approve payment of same upon completion: Bid #24-03 — Copy Paper

### **11.5 Approval of an Agreement Regarding Use of Sangamon Auditorium for the All City Music Festival**

#### Master Facility Use Agreement

The All City Music Festival is an annual music event for District 186 middle and high school musicians. Students are selected from all Springfield middle schools to be a part of a middle school choir and a middle school band. Selected high school musicians make up a high school choir and high school band. The event is to be held at Sangamon Auditorium on March 26, 2024.

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Springfield School District 186 hosts an All City Music Festival in celebration of the city music programs; and

WHEREAS, the Springfield Public Schools Department of Instruction will be responsible for the rental cost of the Sangamon Auditorium;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the agreement for use of Sangamon Auditorium for the 2024 All City Music Festival at an estimated cost of \$7,550.74.

#### **11.6 Approval of a Consulting Agreement for Moving Beyond for Multilingual Learners Virtual Book Study**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Springfield Public School District 186 desires consultant services to provide a virtual book study for District English learners staff; and

WHEREAS, Carly Spina is an educational specialist with the Illinois Resource Center who is qualified to provide such services as a consultant for the District; and

WHEREAS, the cost for these services is \$1,600 and will be paid by EL - Title III Language Instruction Educational Program Grant;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an agreement between Springfield Public School District 186 and Illinois Resource Center for the time period of November 8, 2023, and December 13, 2023, per the terms identified above.

#### **11.7 Approval of an Agreement with DotCom Therapy for Speech Therapy Services**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, District 186 desires services of DotCom Therapy, Inc. for speech/language tele-therapy services; and

WHEREAS, DotCom Therapy is appropriately qualified and able to provide 1.3 FTE speech/language tele-therapy services to Springfield Public School District 186 for the sole purpose of covering speech/language pathology vacancies;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an agreement between Springfield Public School District 186 and DotCom Therapy, Inc. for the time period of October 2, 2023, through March 29, 2024, at an estimated total contract cost of \$82,452 to be paid in monthly minimum payments as stated in the agreement.

#### **11.8 Approval of an Agreement for Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist Services**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Julie A. Adams, a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS), agrees to provide evaluations and direct service to the District; and

WHEREAS, District 186 procures such services for students with disabilities;



NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an agreement between Springfield Public School District 186 and Julie A. Adams at the rate of \$90 per hour plus an additional fee for travel at the rate of \$0.655 per mile for the 2023-2024 school year.

**11.9 Approval of a Cooperative Team Sponsorships**

**Resolution:** BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the cooperative team sponsorship between Lanphier High School, Southeast High School, and Springfield High School for Girls Wrestling for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 seasons.

**ROLL CALL ACTION ITEMS**

**12.1 Approval of Personnel Recommendations**

**Resolution:** The Superintendent recommends the adoption of the Personnel recommendations, as presented.

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Anthony Mares)** Moved, Member **(Micah Miller)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'The Superintendent recommends the adoption of the Personnel recommendations, as presented.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller  
Those voting "no": None

**12.2 Approval of a Resolution to Accept of the Proposal with First Planning Solutions**

The Transportation Department is asking for approval to enter into a contract with First Planning Solutions. This company will assume the duties of routing all Special Ed, Regular Ed, and Early Childhood routes for the District.

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, Springfield Public School District 186 Transportation Department must provide bus routing services for all students being transported; and

WHEREAS, First Planning Solutions has submitted a proposal that fits the District's need in a fiscally responsible manner;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of Springfield Public School District 186 accepts the proposal with First Planning Solutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board directs the Superintendent and District's legal counsel to negotiate a contract commensurate with the attached proposal.

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Micah Miller)** Moved, Member **(Erica Austin)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'WHEREAS, Springfield Public School District 186 Transportation Department must provide bus routing services for all students being transported; and

WHEREAS, First Planning Solutions has submitted a proposal that fits the District's need in a fiscally responsible manner;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of Springfield Public School District 186 accepts the proposal with First Planning Solutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board directs the Superintendent and District's legal counsel to negotiate a contract commensurate with the attached proposal.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller

Those voting "no": None

### **12.3 Approval of a Revision to Board Policy**

**Resolution:** WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Springfield School District 186 maintains Board Policy manuals giving direction to the District; and

WHEREAS, such policy and manuals reflect case law, legal rulings, legislation, and district practice;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board approves the attached policy relating to harassment and bullying prevention.

#### **ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member (**Micah Miller**) Moved, Member (**Buffy Lael-Wolf**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Springfield School District 186 maintains Board Policy manuals giving direction to the District; and

WHEREAS, such policy and manuals reflect case law, legal rulings, legislation, and district practice;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board approves the attached policy relating to harassment and bullying prevention.'

There was discussion regarding cyber-bullying.

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller

Those voting "no": None

Superintendent Gill read a statement regarding events that occurred over the weekend at the Sangamon County x Juvenile Detention Center.

### **12.4 Student Discipline**

**Resolution:** That the Board approves the student discipline as discussed in Executive Session and summarized by the Superintendent, as follows:

- That one 8th grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Douglas School through the end of the 2024-2025 school year without a program; and
- That one 9th grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Douglas Prep through the end of the 2023-2024 school year without a program; and

- That one 9th grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Springfield High School through the end of the 2023-2024 school year with a program..

**ORIGINAL - Motion**

Member **(Buffy Lael-Wolf)** Moved, Member **(Sarah Blissett)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'That the Board approves the student discipline as discussed in Executive Session and summarized by the Superintendent, as follows:

- That one 8th grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Douglas School through the end of the 2024-2025 school year without a program; and
- That one 9th grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Douglas Prep through the end of the 2023-2024 school year without a program; and
- That one 9th grade student be hereby expelled from further attendance at Springfield High School through the end of the 2023-2024 school year with a program.'

Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion **Carried 7 - 0**.

Those voting "aye": Austin, Blissett, Gilmore, Iams, Lael-Wolf, Mares, Miller  
 Those voting "no": None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**13.1 Next Regular Meeting — Monday, October 16, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. — Board Room**

**13.2 Upcoming District Events**

October 9 - No School - Holiday  
 October 19 & 20 - Parent/Teacher Conferences

**13.3 Freedom of Information Report**

Mrs. Lael-Wolf reported that she and the other Board members are wearing pink in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. She encouraged everyone to get the recommended breast cancer screening at the appropriate time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Miller declared the meeting adjourned until Monday, October 16, 2023. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

---

Micah Miller, President

---

Julie Hammers, Board Secretary

Dated: October 16, 2023